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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on a project undertaken by the Australian Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) organization in New South Wales to develop a set of teacher competencies for TESOL instructors. The paper describes how these competencies were developed, outlines general areas of teacher and TESOL competence, and examines in detail eight competencies: (1) can demonstrate knowledge of language pedagogy; (2) can demonstrate knowledge of theoretical approaches to language and language learning; (3) can demonstrate awareness of relevant political, socio-cultural, economic, and educational context of TESOL practice; (4) can establish curriculum and methodological practices which meet the diverse needs of students; (5) can provide opportunities for students to develop spoken and written English in a positive learning environment; (6) can apply principles and techniques to the assessment of spoken and written English; (7) can evaluate effectiveness of TESOL language teaching program; and (8) can work effectively with key personnel in a range of contexts. Two appendixes provide governmental advisory documents on teacher competency and definitions of competency standards. (MDM)

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TESOL TEACHER COMPETENCIES DOCUMENT

Paper presented at TESOL '94 Conference, Baltimore

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Development of TESOL Teacher Competencies

How was this document developed?

An ***ACTA/ATESOL Summer School Colloquium** was held in January 1993. The title of this colloquium was **Towards the Development of TESOL Teacher Competency Statements** and representatives from all ACTA member associations attended. The participants in the colloquium discussed a number of questions related to TESOL teacher competencies.

As a result of the colloquium, a Reference Group was established by ATESOL NSW to assist and advise on the preparation of a TESOL teacher competencies document. Members of the Reference Group represented NSW TAFE, the NSW Department of School Education, the NSW Catholic Education Office, Skillshare, Adult Community Education, ELICOS and NSW Adult Migrant English Service (NSW AMES). Representatives from the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research, Macquarie University and the Institute of Languages at the University of NSW also attended the meetings. A Project Officer, Susan Hogan, was deployed to prepare the first draft.

What was the project brief?

The project aimed to produce a set of competency descriptions incorporating elements and performance indicators which would define the specialised field of TESOL teaching. This aim was in line with national developments regarding teacher competencies and competency statements in other professional areas.

For the purpose of the TESOL Teacher Competencies document the Reference Group adopted the following definition of competence developed by Walker (1992).

> *The attributes (knowledge, skills, attitudes) which enable an individual or group to perform a role or set of tasks to an appropriate level or grade of quality or achievement (ie an appropriate standard) and thus make the individual or group competent in that role.*

The NSW Ministerial Advisory Council on Teacher Education and the Quality of Teaching (MACTEQT) at the beginning of 1993, produced a discussion document on Beginning Teacher Competencies. The Advisory Council was established by the Minister to make explicit the linkage between quality teaching and teacher education courses. In specifying the competencies that beginning teachers need to demonstrate MACTEQT seeks to shape the content of teacher education courses at tertiary institutions and spell out the meaning of initial teacher qualifications.

As a result of consultative processes during 1993, a Framework for Desirable Attributes of Beginning Teachers (Appendix A) was developed and released in November 1993. MACTEQT identified six areas of competence - the Ethics of Teaching, the Content of Teaching, the Practice of Teaching, Interaction with Families and the Community and Professionalism and Professional Development. The TESOL Reference Group agreed to adopt the general statements relating to *ethics* and *professional development* from the MACTEQT document.

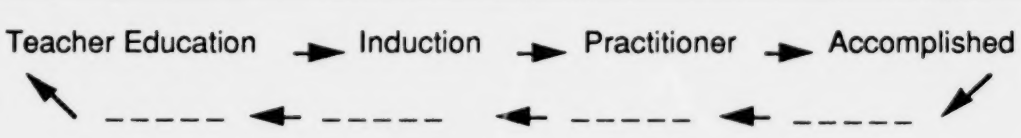
The Reference Group decided that the *content* area in the MACTEQT document would be described as *knowledge* in the TESOL document and agreed to separate *knowledge* and *practice* because it was seen as important to clarify the specialist knowledge a TESOL teacher has. The Reference Group also agreed that the section in the MACTEQT document referring to *interaction with parents and the school community* and the range and conditions for the competencies would best be described and developed by the different TESOL sectors.

* ACTA - Australia Council of TESOL Associations
ATESOL - Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

It has been recognised for many years now that both formal qualifications for TESOL teaching and the provision of quality TESOL teacher education programs are essential. ATESOL NSW believes, following the MACTEQT model and processes, that this specification of TESOL teacher competencies will assist in the dialogue with tertiary institutions about the content of TESOL Teacher Education Courses at preservice and postgraduate level.

ATESOL NSW hopes that this set of competency descriptors will also assist in discussions of a teacher's current competence in order to inform and enhance a teacher's ongoing professional development. The application and the specialisation of the knowledge would vary according to the teaching context. The document highlights the diversity of knowledge that is required by a TESOL teacher and provides a comprehensive view of the areas of competence.

The MACTEQT document is focussed on the beginning teacher. The TESOL Teacher Competencies Reference Group, in dealing with this specialist area, adopted the notion of a continuum of teacher development.



Note: The beginning TESOL teacher at the induction phase may well be an accomplished teacher in another content area.

After a great deal of discussion, the group decided that the *ATESOL* document being developed would address the *practitioner* level of TESOL teacher. In its application, each TESOL sector would need to look at the continuum and the document to consider:

- the implications for teachers in or entering their sector
- the level of competency a beginning TESOL teacher entering that sector might be expected to have
- the professional development and other experiences teachers would need to progress along the continuum

Initially, the Reference Group adopted the National Training Board format (units of competency, elements, performance criteria and range/conditions) for the competencies document. However, after the feedback from the first consultative period, the Reference Group agreed that the format of the document for the *practice* competencies would be changed from the National Training Board format. It was felt that by replacing *performance criteria* with *This will be evident when a teacher* and by adding an *examples* column for the *practice* units of competency, the document would be more reflective of TESOL teachers' work. In addition, it was less likely to atomise teachers' skills or to be used as a checklist in a workplace. It would also be more accessible to teachers and other users of the document. However, examples to illustrate the *knowledge* units of competency were not included in the TESOL document because the *practice* units are in essence the application of that *knowledge*.

It should be noted that where spoken and written language is referred to in the TESOL document, this includes literacy and numeracy.

What was the consultation process?

The initial draft document was distributed throughout the TESOL field in NSW during May and June, 1993. Various members of the Reference Group took responsibility for disseminating the document within their TESOL sector. In NSW TAFE, the document was given to a number of Head Teachers who distributed it to teachers.

Reference Group members from the Catholic Education Office and the Department of School Education examined the document with colleagues and gave valuable feedback. The Project Officer conducted several workshops within NSW AMES, addressed an ATESOL NSW meeting and presented the document in Queensland at the June QATESOL Conference. She delivered a session on the document to a group of ELICOS Directors of Studies, Teacher Educators and classroom teachers. Representative members of the Reference Group also met with Ray Cavanagh from the NSW Teachers Federation to discuss the relevance of the document from a Union perspective. In addition, the document was tabled at the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Multicultural Education and Ethnic Affairs (MACMEEA) meeting in June.

Feedback from all the above forums was incorporated into a second draft which was completed at the end of June, 1993 and copies of the draft document were sent to all ACTA member associations throughout Australia for consideration by their members. Feedback from this consultative phase was received in November. Response to the document was positive and several minor changes were incorporated to improve this final version.

Why was this document developed?

There are distinct advantages to the field of TESOL in adopting competency standards as the following statements outline:

> *National competency standards for teaching sound-and are-rather complex. But their aim is clear: to make teachers' work explicit by establishing, both within the profession and in the public eye, what competent professionals need to know and be able to do. They can provide a model for recognising and articulating what competent teaching actually is.*
>
> *The most compelling reason for developing national competency standards is that, by providing a framework for the uniform recognition of teachers' qualifications and professional standards, they will help to improve the quality of both teaching and learning.*
>
> *This will help to create nationally consistent standards for teacher education and entry to the profession. National competency standards will also foster community understanding of the teaching profession, boosting teachers' professional self confidence and restoring public confidence in teaching.*
>
> (*Quality Time*, National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning, November: 1992)
>
> *Standards provide explicit statements of what people need to be able to do to practise successfully as professionals. Both entry to and progress within the profession are able to be based on more objective and valid criteria than currently exist. This can raise morale within the profession as well as enhance its standing in the community.*
>
> (*What is a competent ABE teacher?* Interim Report, University of Technology, Sydney: 1993)

During the process of consultation many views were expressed about the advantages for such a document. The following is a synthesis of these views:

- competency standards are beneficial as a basis for professional development. A competency document can assist in the planning of teacher education courses, continuing education courses and in professional development
- a competency document provides a common language of skills and knowledge across the various TESOL sectors

- a competency document can assist in the creation of career pathways through/across TESOL sectors
- a competency document will assist in the preservation of existing gains in standards and the alignment of the profession with the National Training Reform Agenda
- a competency document can influence funding bodies and the decisions made on tendering processes

What is this document for?

The overall purpose of the document is to provide guidance to:

- universities on how to structure specialist TESOL teacher education courses
- employers of TESOL teachers on the development and implementation of induction and on-going professional development

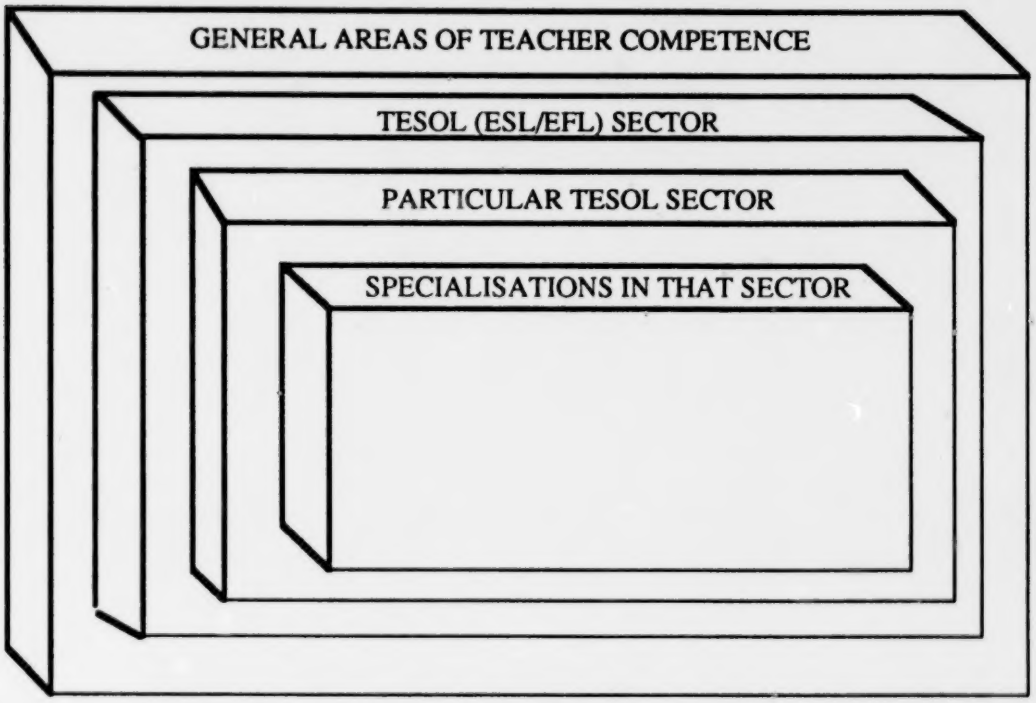
In doing so, it should promote coherence between initial TESOL teacher education, induction and continuing professional development.

During the consultative phase, vigorous discussion took place about the application of the document in industrial contexts. *ATESOL NSW* would assert that any such usage would be negotiated through the normal industrial processes associated with that context. Nevertheless, *ATESOL NSW* believes that the wide ranging discussions across all TESOL sectors which have occurred during the process of development of this document will assist in common understandings around the definition of the specialised field of TESOL teaching.

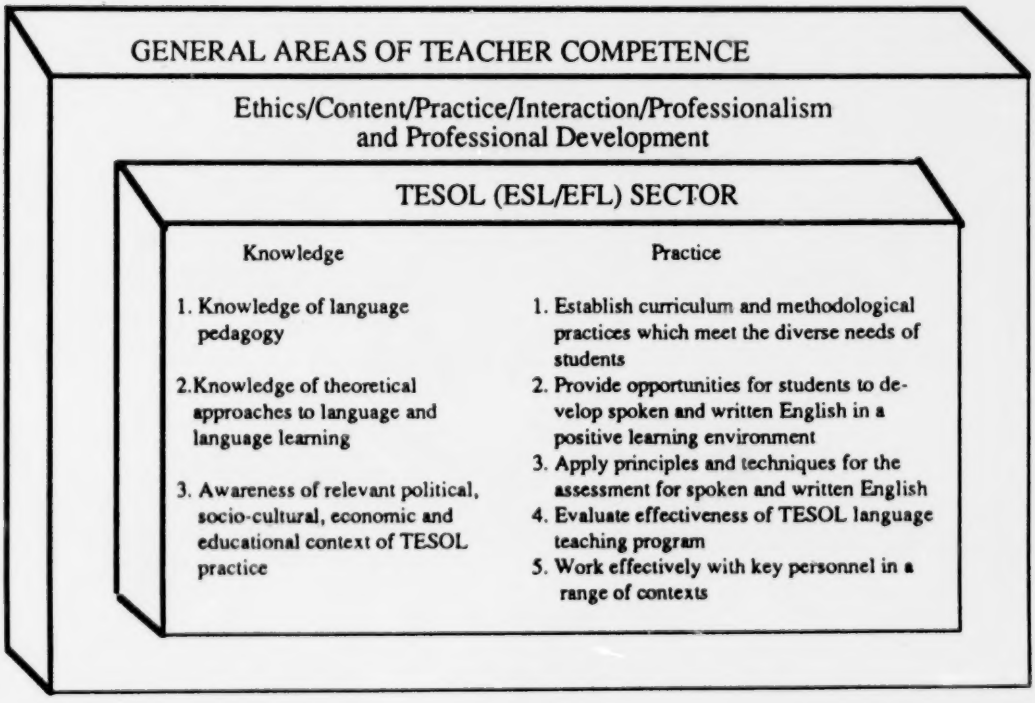
The document was discussed at the ACTA/WATESOL Conference in Perth in January 1994. Further work will be done throughout 1994 on the document and it is hoped that it will be adopted nationally as a document which clearly defines the specialist field of TESOL teaching and which informs the ongoing development of specialist TESOL teacher qualification.

Overview of Teacher Competencies

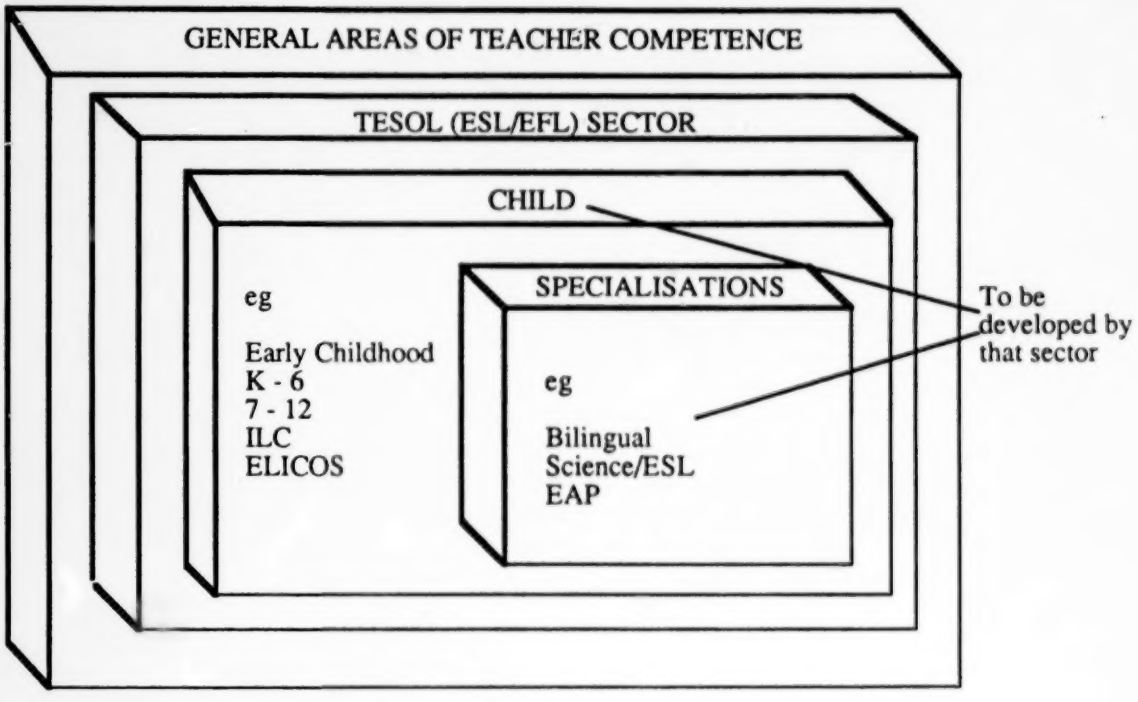
The relationship between general areas of teacher competence and more specialist areas is illustrated in the diagram below.

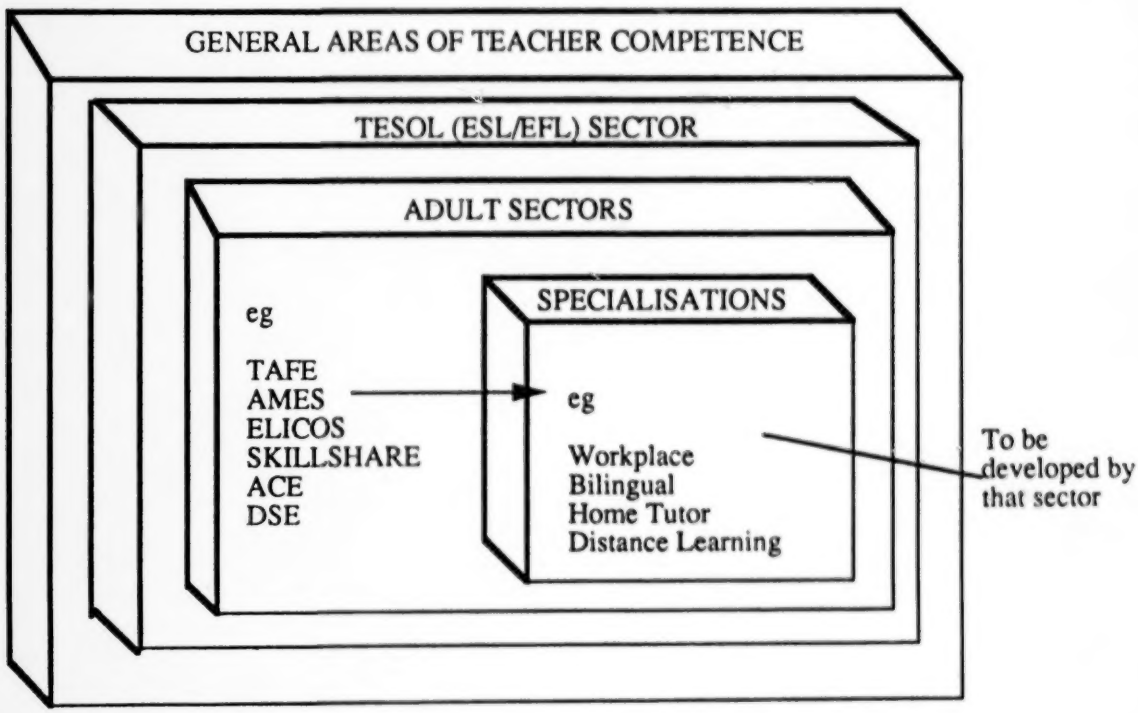


As each area becomes more specialised competency descriptions would need to be expanded or modified to describe the increasing specialisation. The general areas of competence are taken from the Preliminary Statement by the NSW Ministerial Advisory Council on Areas of Competence for Beginning Teachers.


GENERAL AREAS OF TEACHER COMPETENCE
Ethics/Content/Practice/Interaction/Professionalism
and Professional Development
TESOL (ESL/EFL) SECTOR
Knowledge
1. Knowledge of language pedagogy
2. Knowledge of theoretical approaches to language and language learning
3. Awareness of relevant political, socio-cultural, economic and educational context of TESOL practice
Practice
1. Establish curriculum and methodological practices which meet the diverse needs of students
2. Provide opportunities for students to develop spoken and written English in a positive learning environment
3. Apply principles and techniques for the assessment for spoken and written English
4. Evaluate effectiveness of TESOL language teaching program
5. Work effectively with key personnel in a range of contexts

Preliminary diagrams for the description of teacher competencies within the K - 12 and adult areas.





TESOL Teacher Units of Competency

Knowledge
TESOL teachers need to demonstrate that they have:
1. Knowledge of language pedagogy
2. Knowledge of theoretical approaches to language and language learning
3. Awareness of relevant political, socio-cultural, economic and educational context of TESOL practice

Practice
TESOL teachers need to demonstrate that they can:
1. Establish curriculum and methodological practices which meet the diverse needs of students
2. Provide opportunities for students to develop spoken and written English in a positive learning environment
3. Apply principles and techniques for the assessment of spoken and written English
4. Evaluate effectiveness of TESOL language teaching program
5. Work effectively with key personnel in a range of contexts

TESOL Teacher Units of Competency

Ethics of Teaching

TESOL teachers need to demonstrate that they:

1. Act to foster each student's positive self-esteem, well-being, competence and unique potential
2. Recognise and appreciate the values held by individual students, by parents, by groups of students and by the school's/centre's community; including how those values vary and how they relate to teachers' values and the work of the school
3. Are alert to the consequences of their own behaviour and encourage students to develop the same awareness
4. Believe that all their students have a capacity to learn and should be treated justly and equitably
5. Understand the responsibilities and obligations of belonging to the profession of teaching

Professionalism and Professional Development

TESOL teachers need to demonstrate that they can:

1. Participate in a range of professional development activities, as part of their continuing professional development
2. Appreciate the collegial nature of teachers' work and be able to work effectively as members of a team
3. Understand the many roles of other specialists within the profession of teaching
4. Have knowledge of the framework of law, regulations and policies that affect teachers' work
5. Have knowledge of current education, social and environmental issues that affect teachers' work

Ethics of Teaching and *Professionalism and Professional Development* Units adapted from the MACTEQT Document (November 1993).
It should be understood that all teachers need to demonstrate these competencies.

Knowledge

Competency 1 Can demonstrate knowledge of language pedagogy

Elements	This will be evident when a teacher:	Examples
(i) can understand the process of second language development	• applies current theories in relation to second language development • applies knowledge of key elements of second language development in learning environment	*For examples see Practice Competencies*
(ii) can understand the implications of child and adult learning principles as they relate to TESOL teaching practice	• identifies the key characteristics of child/adult learners as they affect the learning processes within the classroom	
(iii) can understand curriculum frameworks of TESOL practice	• identifies key curriculum documents • explains how curriculum framework relates to classroom practice	
(iv) can understand principles of TESOL curriculum/syllabus development	• applies curriculum/syllabus development processes in teaching environment	
(v) can understand current methodological approaches as they relate to the field of TESOL	• applies key current theoretical texts & resources • outlines basis of methodological approaches	
(vi) can understand main phonological features of English	• outlines phonological system of English	
(vii) can understand underlying structural features of English	• outlines the systems of English grammar	

The specialist knowledge a TESOL teacher has is demonstrated and reflected through the practice competencies.

Knowledge

Competency 2 Can demonstrate knowledge of theoretical approaches to language and language learning

Elements	This will be evident when a teacher:	Examples
(i) can outline own theoretical approaches to language teaching and relate this to current theoretical approaches	• identifies own theoretical approaches to language teaching and relates this to current theoretical approaches	*For examples see Practice Competencies*
(ii) can understand that recent approaches to language teaching view language as a socio-cultural meaning system	• identifies the main features of spoken & written language as social interactive processes	
(iii) can understand how language is structured for use	• describes how language is structured to achieve a range of social purposes to establish and maintain social relationships and to construct texts	
(iv) can understand the language demands of the context of their practice	• identifies appropriate language demands of the context of their practice	
(v) can understand that learning a second language is part of the process of becoming bi-cultural	• identifies the relationship of language to culture & how this relates to language learning	

The specialist knowledge a TESOL teacher has is demonstrated and reflected through the practice competencies.

Knowledge

Competency 3 Can demonstrate awareness of relevant political, socio-cultural, economic and educational context of TESOL practice

Elements	This will be evident when a teacher:	Examples
(i) is aware of Government policies and practice which affect the TESOL teaching context	• identifies relevant policy and practice documents which relate to specific contexts of TESOL practice	*For examples see Practice Competencies*
(ii) is aware of policies related to access and equity in the TESOL context	• identifies relevant access & policy documents in the TESOL context	
(iii) can understand the implications of the multi-cultural character of Australian society for the TESOL teaching profession	• identifies the implications of cultural diversity for TESOL classrooms • acknowledges own culture as specific within a multi-cultural society • structures learning environment which demonstrates respect for own and other culture's needs	
(iv) can understand the implications of the migration process on language learning (as applicable)	• identifies possible effects of the migration experience on the process of language learning • identifies phases of the settlement process as it relates to students • explains the effect of relevant economic situation on programs and students	
(v) can understand the effects on language learning of temporary dislocation for tourist /visitor students (as applicable)	• identifies possible effects on language learning of temporary dislocation for tourist /visitor students	
(vi) can understand the implications of educational theory as it relates to current TESOL teaching practice	• is able to demonstrate and link theory to classroom practice, TESOL curriculum and methodology • outlines approaches in TESOL curriculum design & methodology	
(vii) is aware of community services appropriate to student needs	• identifies relevant community services	

The specialist knowledge a TESOL teacher has is demonstrated and reflected through the practice competencies.

Practice

Competency 1 Can establish curriculum and methodological practices which meet the diverse needs of students

Elements	This will be evident when a teacher:	Examples
(i) can understand and apply relevant TESOL learning principles to current learning situation	• identifies language content and sociocultural needs of learning group • sets priority areas with students	• *uses a range of teaching approaches eg. genre, communicative, etc* • *selects the most appropriate student tasks for learning outcomes eg info gap, written models, role play, language labs, games etc* • *uses a wide variety of materials and resources in planning student learning tasks, including excursions, audio-visual resources, people, computers and texts* • *values the diversity of students' cultural backgrounds* • *utilises students own knowledge and experience* • *incorporates into teaching specific features of English language in context eg word order, pronunciation, tenses, text construction etc* • *gives simple brief instructions to students so that their task is clear to them* • *provides a range of different materials and activities for mixed level groups*
(ii) can develop and implement TESOL courses which meet the needs of their students and institution	• sets appropriate language teaching objectives • selects relevant content to develop an appropriate learning program	
(iii) can select and use a range of TESOL methodologies which meet the language and learning needs of students	• selects appropriate activities and materials to reach desired outcomes and to meet learner needs	
(iv) can use a variety of teaching strategies to develop listening, speaking (including pronunciation), reading and writing skills	• integrates spoken and written language in sequenced activities	
(v) can manage teaching resources to maximise educational outcomes	• identifies relevant materials/resources • uses appropriate teaching resources	
(vi) can incorporate sociocultural knowledge into teaching of language	• contextualises language within socio-cultural contexts	

(vii) can apply knowledge of phonological, grammatical and lexical systems to interpret/explain features of spoken and written language	• explains and demonstrates phonological, grammatical and lexical systems as they relate to spoken & written texts	• *develops students' strategies and confidence to continue their language development in all contexts eg library research skills, dealing with a variety of unexpected conversational situations , individual learning centres, using current technology, further developing learning to learn skills, accessing further training etc.*
(viii) can provide explicit models of spoken and written language in context, followed by guided practice and opportunities for language use	• selects and models samples of spoken and written language as text • selects a range of activities which provide guided practice • provides opportunities for language use within and outside the learning environment	
(ix) can use a language level appropriate to students' ability	• uses a level of English which is not too difficult but challenges students to extend their language skills a little at a time • is able to cater for disparate levels within the learning environment	
(x) can facilitate independent learning of spoken and written language	• identifies range of independent learning strategies • promotes use of these strategies within and outside learning environment	

Practice

Competency 2 Can provide opportunities for students to develop spoken and written English in a positive learning environment

Elements	This will be evident when a teacher:	Examples
(i) can create a positive environment for language learning	• actively promotes acceptance and discussion of cultural and other differences within a multicultural learning environment • ensures that students are aware of access and equity policy and that this policy is reflected in the learning environment • raises awareness of relevant anti-discrimination policies	• *provides explicit and accessible information to students on* - *multiculturalism* - *anti-discrimination policies and procedures* - *EEO policies and procedures* • *actively encourages students to support each other in their language learning including risk taking, valuing contributions of other cultural groups* • *uses positive feedback techniques* • *encourages students and values their L1 as a positive resource in learning English eg builds on students' literacy and numeracy in both L1 and English in concept development* • *makes use of bilingual books, signs* • *works collaboratively with staff members, interpreter services, other students, other community resources* • *discusses students' expectations and explains purpose of various teaching approaches eg group and pair work, student /teacher directed learning*
(ii) can acknowledge the role of students' first language in second-language development	• creates a learning environment where students' first language is valued and utilised and where each student's input is valued	
(iii) can utilise bilingual assistance effectively in a range of situations	• identifies sources of bilingual assistance	
(iv) can cater for a range of learning styles within a multicultural learning environment	• identifies preferred learning styles • ensures teaching methods are varied and flexible to meet diverse learning styles	

Practice

Competency 3 Can apply principles and techniques for the assessment of spoken and written English

Elements	This will be evident when a teacher:	Examples
(i) can use a range of second-language assessment techniques	• chooses assessment tasks appropriate to purpose, student group, curriculum documents and educational sector	• *assesses students language and learning needs to determine initial spoken and written language competencies and to negotiate individual learning pathways* • *uses appropriate assessment tools to monitor student progress and assess achievement* • *uses the interpretation of assessment results to place or refer students and to inform programming* • *uses collaborative assessment techniques where appropriate* • *encourages students to self-assess* • *gives timely and constructive feedback to students*
(ii) can use appropriate documentation system as negotiated between the organisation, government and representatives of interested teachers	• completes documentation as required by the organisation	• *records assessment/achievement results of students to meet the negotiated educational requirements of organisation/government and representatives of interested teachers* • *reports results to appropriate organisations and/or individuals whilst ensuring students' rights are protected*

Practice

Competency 4 Can evaluate effectiveness of TESOL language teaching program

Elements	This will be evident when a teacher:	Examples
(i) can reflect critically on teaching practice and its appropriacy to the specific context of the immediate student/teacher interaction	• analyses student achievement in terms of stated objectives/competencies • assesses appropriateness of methodology and content	• *monitors student's comprehension, task completion, ability to complete assignments and other assessment tasks* • *modifies teaching accordingly*
(ii) can structure evaluation process to incorporate feedback from a variety of sources	• elicits constructive comment from co-teachers, students and other key personnel involved in the teaching program	• *sets up formal and/or informal networks and procedures to gain feedback eg discussions with colleagues, staff meetings, student surveys* • *incorporates evaluation feedback information into further programming*
(iii) can use evaluation to inform future development of programs	• uses information to refine methodology and programming skills • contributes to planning within a wider organisational context	• *participates in appropriate forums eg meetings, committees, reference groups, etc* • *makes recommendations for changes to documents and similar programs as required*

Practice

Competency 5 Can work effectively with key personnel in a range of contexts

Elements	This will be evident when a teacher:	Examples
(i) can apply specialist TESOL knowledge to inform, plan and assist in the delivery of contextualised teaching programs	• informs other key personnel about special needs of students whose language and literacy levels may not be commensurate with the course requirements • integrates language/content teaching where possible	• *supports NESB students eg withdrawal groups, additional language support within classroom/workplace, teaches parallel classes etc* • *meets with colleagues regularly to discuss and plan teaching program* • *co- or team teaches as required*
(ii) can work co-operatively with other key personnel in course design and delivery	• plans program or course co-operatively with other key personnel • demonstrates flexibility and adaptability when working with others	

GLOSSARY

ABE	Adult Basic Education
ACE	Adult Community Education
ACTA	Australian Council of TESOL Associations
AMES	Adult Migrant English Service
ATESOL	Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
CEO	Catholic Education Office
DSE	Department of School Education
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
ELICOS	English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students
ILC	Intensive Language Centre
MACMEEA	Ministerial Advisory Committee on Multicultural Education and Ethnic Affairs
MACTEQT	Ministerial Advisory Council on Teacher Education and the Quality of Teaching
NTB	National Training Board
NPQTL	National Project on the Quality of Teaching & Learning
QATESOL	Queensland Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
TAFE	Department of Technical & Further Education
WATESOL	Western Australian Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

Appendix A

NSW Ministerial Advisory Council on Teacher Education and the Quality of Teaching (MACTEQT) Document (Extract) - January 1993

1. The Ethics of Teaching

All beginning teachers should be able to demonstrate that they:

a) Believe that all their students have a capacity to learn and should be treated justly and equitably,

b) Are alert to the consequences of their own behaviour and encourage students to develop the same awareness,

c) Recognise and appreciate the values held by individual students, by parents, by groups of students and by the school's/centre's community; including how those values vary and how they relate to teachers' values and the work of the school;

d) Understand that they have a responsibility for their students' well-being.

2. The Content of Teaching

All beginning teachers need to:

a) Have a thorough understanding of the content of learning and teaching including the underlying structure of the subject matter and its relationship to other areas of knowledge;

b) Have an understanding of learning and teaching as preparation of students for lifelong learning, and for developing and upgrading skills areas in a range of occupational categories including vocational employment opportunities;

c) Have an understanding of how students develop and how they learn;

d) Recognise, and in conjunction with appropriate support services, meet the individual learning needs of all students, including:

- Girls
- Gifted and talented students
- Aboriginal students
- Students with disabilities, learning difficulties or behaviour disorders
- Students from low socio-economic backgrounds
- Students from non-English speaking backgrounds
- Students living in isolated areas

e) Be able to adapt their teaching to suit their students and the context in which they are teaching;

f) Be well informed about the purposes, nature and uses of a wide variety of assessment strategies,

g) Understand the nature, sources and application of learning and information resources,

h) Be aware of and develop the capacity to use new information technologies in educational contexts;

i) Be able to incorporate the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills regardless of the subject or age group being taught.

3. The Practice of Teaching

Beginning teachers should be able to:

a) Use the English language to communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing, in the range of roles and contexts occurring within the classroom and the school community;

b) Establish and maintain a school and classroom learning environment which is:

- Safe and supportive
- Orderly and purposeful
- Interesting and challenging

c) Continually develop a wide range of teaching strategies by:

- Effective structuring of learning tasks:
- Motivating and engaging students;
- Establishing expectations for students that are clear, challenging and achievable;
- Monitoring and assessing student progress consistently and providing genuine feedback to students and parents on that progress;
- Increasing learners' own source of responsibility for learning;
- Evaluating the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the teaching program and its delivery.

d) Understand that they are working as part of a community team and develop the necessary skills to work effectively in the team and communicate clearly with students, parents and colleagues:

- The broad intentions of any unit or segment of learning;
- An outline of the content of that unit or segment;
- What work is expected of the student;
- How the progress/development of students is to be assessed and the relationship between assessment and the teaching/learning program;
- Students' progress.

e) Reflect critically on their teaching practices;

f) Believe in, express and be able to justify the value of what they teach.

4. Management in classroom/school/centres

Beginning teachers should show developing competencies in:

a) Interpreting and operating within relevant legislation, government policy and system guidelines that underpin educational programs and services and relate to the management of the particular educational setting;

b) Operational knowledge of school/centre/classroom management, including relevant aspects of resource management;

c) Educational leadership and personnel management.

5. Interaction with Parents and the School Community

Beginning teachers should:

a) Recognise that their responsibilities extend beyond the educational setting to encompass the development of the school or centre as an institution, including its interrelationship with the community, with other schools/centres and where appropriate with the education system of which they are a part;

b) Be able to interact effectively with those primarily responsible for the students they teach, including consultation with parents concerning parental involvement in students' learning, and oversight of the social and emotional development of children.

6. Professionalism and Professional Development

Beginning teachers should:

a) Understand the responsibilities and obligation of belonging to the profession of teaching;

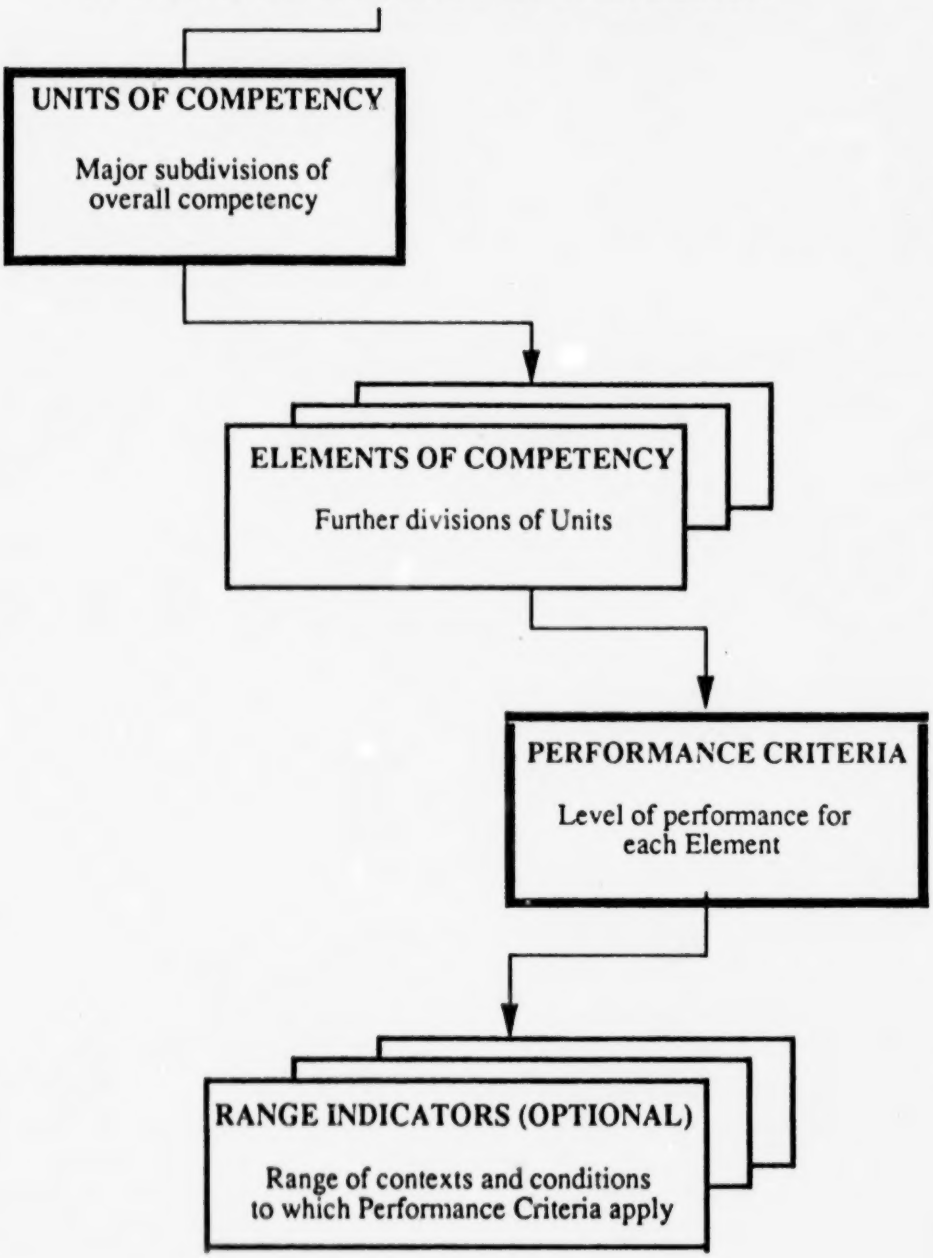
b) Acknowledge their responsibilities for their continuing professional development;

c) Appreciate the collegial nature of teachers' work and be able to work effectively as members of a team;

d) Have knowledge of the framework of law and regulation that affect teachers' work;

e) Have knowledge of current educational issues that affect teachers' work.

OVERVIEW OF FORMAT OF COMPETENCY STANDARDS


OVERALL COMPETENCY OF PROFESSION
UNITS OF COMPETENCY
Major subdivisions of overall competency
ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCY
Further divisions of Units
PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
Level of performance for each Element
RANGE INDICATORS (OPTIONAL)
Range of contexts and conditions to which Performance Criteria apply

(**HEYWOOD, L. et al.** 1992. *A Guide to Development of Competency Standards for Professions.* Canberra: NOOSR.)

DEFINITIONS OF COMPETENCY

National standards define the competencies required for effective performance in employment.

A **competency** comprises the specification of knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill within an occupation or industry level to the standard of performance required in employment.

The **concept of competency** focuses on what is expected of an employee in the workplace rather than on the learning process; it embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments. This is a broad concept of competency in that all aspects of work performance, and not only narrow task skills, are included.

Units of Competency

A **standard** at any level is expressed in **units of competency,** each of which then comprises two parts:

- elements of competency
- their associated performance criteria

A unit of competency is a discrete product or output, that is , a grouping of activities within an occupation.

Elements of competency are the basic building blocks of the system as a whole and of the unit of competency. Elements of competency, in relation to units, describe the lowest logical, identifiable and discrete subgrouping of actions and knowledge which contribute to and build a unit.

Performance criteria are evaluative statements which specify the required level of performance and should provide a satisfactory link between the competency and the required evidence of achievement.

(National Training Board Guidelines)